A 20

DEFENCE

OF THE

Plain-Man's

REPLY

TO THE

Catholick Missionaries.

Being a further Examination of the Pretended *Infallibility* of the Church of *Rome.*

Imprimatur.

March 29. 1688. *Guil. Needham* R. R. in Christo Patri ac D. D. *Wilhelmo* Archiep. *Cant.* a Sac. Domest.

By the Author of the *Plain-Man's Reply to the Catholick Missionaries.*

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Advertisement.

SOme Papers having lately passed, betwixt a *Romish-Missioner* and a *Country-Parson*, it may not be improper so far to gratify the Reader's Curiosity, as to acquaint him with the occasion of them. Which shall thus briefly be represented under the Title of

The Argument.

A *Romish* Priest *being wearied with the noise and hurry of the* Town, *for his Diversion and Health, retires into the* Country. *Where observing a* Farmer, *in a pleasant field holding his Plough, in hopes of a Convert he enters into a close Discourse with him. The* Plough-man *at first is much startled with his Address; and fenceth as well as his Mother-wit will allow*

allow him: and gives very good Reason (according to some Directions received from his Parson) why he ought not to engage in Discourses of that nature. Till at last, conquered by the civility or importunity of the Priest, *he admits the Debate. And to bring the matter to a short Issue, the* Farmer *puts him to prove the* Infallibility *of his Church. And withal desires him particularly to inform him;* Who is this Living Infallible Judg, *that so upon occasion he may consult him?* Who is this unerring Guid, *that so he may submit himself to his Conduct? Wherein the* Priest *not being able to give him any tolerable Satisfaction; the* Plough-man *is so far from embracing the Communion of the* Church *of* Rome, *that he is more firm and affectionate to the* Church

Church *of* England *than he was before. And in Charity to the rest of his Brethren, of the same Capacity with himself (by the Advice and with the* Direction *of his* Parson) *he publisheth the substance of the* Conference *under the Title of,* The Plain-mans Reply to the Catholic Missionaries. *Which together with the forementioned* Directions *of his* Parson, *called;* The Country-Parsons Admonition to his Parishioners, *was so displeasing to the* Romish *Party; that they have Published a pretended Confutation of them both. Titled,* The Plain-mans Answer to his Country-Parsons Admonition. Together with the Missioners Answer, to the Plain-mans Reply. *To the former of these an* Answer *hath been lately Published, with this Title, viz.* A Defence of the Country-Parsons Admonition against the Exceptions of the Plain-mans Answer. *And a* Reply *to the latter, being a full Vindication of the* Plain-man *against the Missioner, is attempted in this following Discourse.*

THE

THE Country-Parson's REFLECTIONS Upon the *Missioners Answer.*

A Parishioner of mine, an honest *Plain-man*, was prevailed upon by the Importunity of others, to hearken to the Whispers of a Romish Priest. Who suggested to him, that as without *Faith* there is no Salvation, so without *Infallibility* there is no Faith; and that this Infallibility is only to be found in the Church of Rome.

The *Plain-man*, with whom *Saying* and *Doing* are two things, very bluntly demands; How it appears that the Church of Rome is Infallible? And desires the *Priest to give him in Writing one or two of his best Arguments, and then promiseth to consider them at his leasure.* Country Parsons Admonition pag. 15.

The Missioner assures him, he can prove by undeniable Arguments; That the Church of Rome is infallible. Which he will undertake in this method. By shewing,

" 1. *What is meant by the Church* " *of Rome.*

" 2. *What is meant by Infallible.*

" 3. *From whence the Church of* " *Rome had this Infallibility.*

" 4. *How they prove it.*

" 5. *Where we may find this* " *Church.*

" 6. And lastly, *How we may* " *know when she speaks to us, and* " *what she teacheth.*

[Missioners Answer. *p.* 9.]

This Paper being sent to the *Plain-man* he gives it to his *Parson*, and desires his judgment of it: Intimating further, that the *Missioner* thinks these Arguments very convincing and therefore expects an Answer to them. [*p.*21.]

Now in order to the *Plain-mans* satisfaction (and the Missioners also if he please to accept it) I do thus examine that Paper in its own Method.

And

And *First* I am not satisfied with his Description of the Church of Rome, *viz.*

" By the Church of *Rome* we " do not mean the particular Di- " oceſs of *Rome*, or any particu- " lar Church or Assembly, but " the *Catholick Church* spread over " the face of the whole World, " in Communion with the *Bishop* " of *Rome*, the Supream Pastor " of the Church of Christ.

[*Missioners Answer.* pag. 9.]

In this Description here are *three* Things supposed.

1. *That the Church of Rome is the Catholic Church.*

2. *That the Bishop of Rome is the Supream Pastor of the Church of Christ.*

3. *That the Catholick Church, spread over the face of the whole World, is in Communion with the Bishop of Rome.*

The *Two* former are deny'd, therefore I expect their Proof. And the *Third* must not be granted without its due explication.

1. As to the first, the *Plain-man*

hath told him; That though it is the noted "miſtake of ſome wri-"ters, to call the Church of *Rome* "the Church *Catholic* (and then "to apply all the Promiſes of Pro-"tection and Preſervation to her "as ſuch) yet this is only their "own confident Suppoſal, with-"out the leaſt manner of "Proof. [*Plain-mans Reply* p. 10.]

Being thus admoniſhed, why did not the Prieſt confirm this Propoſition wherein his Cauſe is ſo much concern'd? Nay! Why did he thus prevaricate in omitting to do it, when ſo fair an occaſion was offer'd?

For; Several Texts of Scripture (of which more anon) being cited by the Miſſioner, To prove the *Infallibility* of the Church of Rome, The *Plain-man* thus Reply's.

"I muſt confeſs theſe are great "Privileges, but I have been told "theſe belong to the Univerſal "Church, compoſed of all Chriſti-"ans. So that if you can ſhew me "5. That theſe promiſes were made

" made to the *Roman* Church, or " *That she is the only true Church* " *of Christ*, I shall most willing- " ly hear you.

[*Missioners Answer*. p. 14.]

This Demand was rational and to the purpose. To which the *Missioner* makes this Answer.

" This may be easily made clear " to you, if you do but remember " what I told you we mean by the "Roman Catholic Church. [p. 15.]

And what was it that he had told him? Even this (but then you must take it upon his word) *The Church of Rome is the Catholic Church*. And further this Deponent saith not.

Now in kindness to this Missioner (that I may direct him in his Proof, which I'le assure him is expected from him) I shall a little more distinctly examine this matter.

Whoever shall pretend to prove that the Church of *Rome* is the Catholick Church, He must consider.

1. The nature of the *Christian* Church.

2. He must examine, Why, and upon what account the *Christian* Church is stiled *Catholic*. And from thence he will be prepared to determine; Whether the Church of *Rome* is the Catholic Church.

As to the nature of the Christian Church, the Trent-Catechism, out of S:. *Augustine*, doth thus instruct us.

Ecclesia est Populus fidelis per universum orbem dispersus. Cat. Rom. P. 1. c. 10. Sect. 2.

The *Christian* Church is, *The Company of Believers* [*A Society of men professing the Faith of Christ*] *dispersed and scatter'd over all the world.*

And this Church is stiled *Catholick* in these *Two* respects.

1. *With respect to the Persons who make this Profession.* Who are not now confined to one Nation, or limited to one People, as the *Jewish* Church was. *But in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him.* Hence St. *Augustine.* [*Ep.* 170.] tells us. *The Church is called*

called C A T H O L I C, *because it is ſpread throughout the whole World.*

2. *With reſpect to the Faith which is profeſſed.* And ſo *Catholic* is the ſame with ſound and *Orthodox*. In which ſenſe *Particular* Churches, and the Biſhops of thoſe Churches, in antient Writings, are often ſtiled *Catholic*; in oppoſition to Hereticks and Schiſmaticks.

Now in whether of theſe *Two* reſpects will this Miſſioner pretend, that the Church of *Rome* is the Catholic Church?

1. Will he affirm that ſhe is Catholic *with reſpect to the Perſons who make this Profeſſion*? Then, ſhe is the whole Church. Then, there is no other Church but the *Roman* (taking in thoſe other Churches which ſubmit to her Authority,) In ſhort; Then the Roman-Catholics *alone* do make Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and there are no other Chriſtians in the World but Papiſts.

If this be his meaning, for his

conviction, let me then desire him to resolve me.

When any Member of the Church of *England* is reconciled, as they phrase it, to the Church of *Rome*; Was that Person, before his Reconciliation, a Member of the Church of *Christ*, or was he not? Was he a Christian, or was he not? If not Why then do they not admit him into the Church by Baptism?

But if this Missioner is forced to grant; That such a Convert was a Christian, and a Member of the Church of Christ even before he was a Roman-Catholic; Then, there are other Christians besides Papists; and there are other Churches besides the Roman. Then the Church of *Rome* is not the *Whole* Church; and consequently, in this first sense of the word, is not the *Catholic* Church. But

2. Will this Missioner pretend, That the Church of *Rome* is the *Catholic* Church, in the other notion of the word, *i. e. Sound* and *Orthodox*?

If

If this be his Project 'tis then expected, that he prepare us an Answer to that larg Bill of Indictment, which the Reformed Writers have prefer'd against her. And when he shall have given us Satisfaction, as to all those Errors and Corruptions with which she is charged; As for instance *The Sacrifice of the Mass*; *Transubstantiation*, *Half-Communion*, *Prayers in an unknown Tongue*, *Worship of Images*, *Invocation of Saints*, *Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead*, &c. Then, and not till then, we may grant; That the Church of *Rome* is *Catholic* in this *Second* sense of the word: And that she is a *Sound* and *Orthodox* Church.

And so I leave him to his Defence (which he may prepare at his leasure) and proceed to consider his *Second* Supposition, *viz*:

2. *That the Bishop of Rome is the Supream Pastor of the Church of Christ.*

This is the Fundamental Article of the *Romish* Faith. And yet there is not one word of it in the

Apostles

Apoſtles Creed, which is the Sum of the *Chriſtian* Faith. No nor yet in the *Holy Scriptures*, out of which that Creed was taken.

That *de facto* this Supremacy was not granted to the Biſhops of *Rome*, in the *firſt* and pureſt Ages of the Church, but that their Encroachments were ſtill oppoſed; is moſt evidently ſhewed by the Learnd *Dr. Cave*, in *A Diſſertation concerning the Government of the Ancient Church.*

That the *Britannick* Churches were ever exempted from all foreign Juriſdiction for the firſt *Six Hundred* Years, and ſo ought to continue (if this Miſſioner will be ſo modeſt as to hearken to Inſtruction) the renowned Arch-Biſhop *Bramhal* hath undeniably proved.

And therefore, if proſperous Uſurpation may be called in Queſtion, I would ask *Quo jure?* This Supremacy of the Pope whence was it? *from Heaven or of Men?* Who gave him this Authority, to Rule and Govern the whole Church of Chriſt? Their

Their usual pretence for such exorbitant Power, is known to be this, *viz.*

That our Blessed Saviour, before his Ascension, did constitute St. *Peter his Vicar, Deputy and Vicegerent: and as such gave him a Monarchical Supremacy and Jurisdiction over the rest of the Apostles, and the whole Church. The which Supremacy was not Personal and Temporary, to cease with his Person (as the Apostleship did) but was to be transferr'd to his Successor. The which Successor* (say they) *is the Bishop of Rome.*

This is their Plea. In confirmation of which these following Propositions must be established.

1. That St. *Peter* had a Primacy over the Apostles.

2. That this Primacy did include a Supremacy of Power, and Dominion or Jurisdiction over the Apostles.

3. That St. *Peters* Primacy with its Rights and Prerogatives was not Personal, but derivable, to his Successors.

4. That St. *Peter* was Bishop of

of *Rome*, and continued till his Death in poſſeſſion of that Office.

5. That the Biſhops of *Rome*, as Succeſſors of St. *Peter* (according to Gods inſtitution and by original Right derived thence) ſhould have an Univerſal Supremacy and Juriſdiction over the Chriſtian Church.

6. That in fact the *Roman* Biſhops continually from St. *Peters* time have enjoyed and excerciſed this Sovereign Power.

7. That this Power is indefectible and unalterable.

Theſe are the Pillars of the *Romiſh* Cauſe. And therefore if this Miſſioner will be ſhewing his ſkill, let him practiſe upon theſe Points. But when he attempts it he ſhall find to his coſt, that the Learned Dr. *Barrow* hath examined them before him: In his excellent *Treatiſe* of the *Pope's Supremacy*. To which I refer him.

So much for that. I am next to examined his *Third* Suppoſition *viz.*

3. *That*

3. *That the Catholic Church, ſpread over the face of the whole world, is in Communion with the Biſhop of Rome.*

To determine this matter, we muſt conſider the nature of Church-Communion. Of which briefly thus.

Church-Communion, to ſpeak properly, doth chiefly reſpect the Univerſal Church. For to be in Communion with the Church, it is to be a member of the *Church Catholick*; in plain terms it is to be a Chriſtian; as we were made by Baptiſm, the Seal of the New Covenant. Into which Covenant being thus admitted, we are united to the whole Church. And by virtue of this union, as Church-Members, have a common Right to all Church-Priviledges and Bleſſings, and a common obligation to all Church-Offices and Duties.

The which Communion (or Communication) in Religious Duties, though it be limited and reſtrained, in the uſe and exerciſe

cise of it, to particular Churches and Congregations (for all Christians in the world cannot meet together) yet all such Acts of Worship (as *Prayers*, *Sacraments*, *Hearing the word*, &c.) are performed by us, as Members of the Catholic Church. And therefore we are obliged to Communicate in these Duties, not only with our own National Church but also, if our occasions do call us abroad, with any other Church in the world: Provided that we may do it upon Catholic Terms and Conditions.

These things premised, we are now prepared to Determine, How far the Catholic Church, spread over the face of the whole world, is in Communion with the Bishop of *Rome*.

Which will easily be decided by observing, That there is a *Two-fold* Communion.

1. Of *Co-ordination* or *Friendship*.
2. *Subordination* or *Subjection*.

As to the former we may safely affirm; All the Churches in the

the world are thus far in Communion with the Bishop of *Rome*; That they may own him for a Christian Bishop; as acknowledging the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, though indeed a very corrupt Church. And if they do not Communicate further with him, it is his own fault.

But this it it seems will not satisfie this Missioner: Who most vainly fancy's that there is no Communion without Subjection. And that no Church can be in Communion with the Church of *Rome*, without submitting to her Authority.

When therefore it is affirmed; That the Catholic Church is thus Subject to the Bishop of *Rome*: If this Missioner pleads; That *de facto* all other Churches are actually thus Subject; we then deny it; for the greater part of Christendom doth protest against the Errors, and oppose the Usurpations of the Bishop of *Rome*. But if he contends that *de jure* they

they ought so to be, and that this Subjection is their Duty, then let him prove it.

What I have now said, is sufficient to convince this Missioner, of his mistaken Notion of the *Church* of *Rome*. Which if he thinks fit to Defend, he must then prove.

1. *That the Church of Rome is the Catholic Church.* i.e. He must convince us, Either (1.) That she is the *whole* Church, and that there is no other Church besides her; or else (2.) That she is the only *true* and *Orthodox* Church.

2. *That the Bishop of Rome is the Supream Pastor of the Church of Christ.* Which when he hath proved, I shall then grant him.

3. *That the Catholic Church spread over the face of the whole world, is in Communion with* i. e. is Subject to *the Bishop of Rome.*

And here should I now hold my Pen, and proceed no further in my Reflections, I have given this Missioner work enough.

But if he will be so modest as

to

to confeſs his miſtake, I'le help him to a better Definition of the Church of *Rome*, and leſs liable to exception.

" By the *Roman* Church, we do " not underſtand the particular " Dioceſs of *Rome*; but we un- " derſtand, that vaſtly extended " Community of Chriſtians which " hold Communion with the " Church of *Rome*, ſubmitting " themſelves to the Biſhop of " *Rome* as to their Head; ſo that " whatſoever he Decrees with a " General Council they embrace " as the Definition of the true " Church, which they hold In- " fallible. [*Queſtion of Queſtions*, " Sect. 17. p. 373.]

Had this Miſſioner been ſo prudent as to have conſulted this Author (whom he was pleaſed to recommend for the *Plain-mans* Satisfaction) we might then *make ſhort work on't*: and without further diverſion, might have proceeded to the *Second* Inquiry, *viz.*

2. *What is meant by Infallible?*

Which he thus explains.

" By

"By the word *Infallibility* we "do not mean only *Indefectibility* "and *Duration*, but an *unerring* "*Direction* in neceſſary points of "Faith. So that when we ſay the "Church (*of* Rome) is infallible, "we mean; that Almighty God "hath given an Authoritative "Power to the Church (of *Rome*) "to declare, in caſe of Diffe-"rences, which is the *Faith which* "*was once delivered to the Saints*, "Jude 3. So that in caſe of Dif-"ferences about the ſenſe "of *Scripture*, or any divinely "revealed Truths, the Church "(of *Rome*) is to decide the Dif-"ference, and end the Contro-"verſie. And to perform this, "we ſay, ſhe is aſſiſted by the "Spirit of Almighty God, who, "as he hath ordained her for our "Direction, ſo he ſecures her "from erring whilſt ſhe Directs. "Which aſſiſtance we call Infallibi-"lity. [*Miſſioners Anſwer.* p. 10.]

This he endeavours to confirm, by inquiring *Thirdly*,

"3. *From whence had ſhe* [the Church

" Church of Rome] *this Authority*
" *of unerring Guidance?* (p. 11.)
To which he gives us this
Anſwer.

" You muſt not think that the
" Church [of *Rome*] has this
" power from her ſelf; for we
" know that all men may fail;
" All Communities and Aſſem-
" blies are ſubject to error and
" miſtakes (*where then is the In-*
" *fallibility of Oral Tradition?*)
" But ſhe has it from God him-
" ſelf, *who is faithful and true to*
" *his Promiſes.* (Ibid.) But

" 4. How doth it appear that
" the Church of *Rome* is thus
" Infallible, and that God hath
" made her theſe Promiſes of
" unerring Guidance? (*Ibid.*)

" This he tells us, is evident
" from the plain Teſtimonies of
" Holy Scripture, both Old and
" New Teſtament (*Ibid.*)

Thus far I do readily Sub-
ſcribe; That if the Church of
Rome is Infallible, She muſt have
this Priviledg from God himſelf.
And if there is ſuch a Promiſe of
unerring

unerring Guidance it muſt be found in the Holy Scriptures.

Let it therefore appear from thoſe Sacred Writings, that God hath promiſed ſuch an unerring Guidance to the Church of *Rome*, and I ſhall then Diſpute no further, but ſubmit to her Direction.

Now to prove this *Infallibility*, this Miſſioner hath cited *Twenty* Places of Scripture, which the *Queſtion* of *Queſtions* tells him are in the Bible. But how little they are to his purpoſe, I do thus endeavour to convince him, by examining them in their order.

His *Firſt* Text is that noted Place, *Deut.* 17. 8. *&c.* From whence the Argument is this. *The Jewiſh Church was Infallible*, Therefore *The Church of Rome is Infallible.*

To which I thus Anſwer.

Both Propoſitions, *Antecedent* and *Conſequent*, are falſe.

And, *Firſt*, it doth not appear from this Place of Scripture (nor indeed from any other) That the Jewiſh Church was Infallible.

From

From what Circumſtance in this Text will the Miſſioner infer ſuch a Concluſion?

Was it 1. Becauſe in that Church there was a Supream Court of Judicature, *from whence there was no Appeal*? Or 2. Becauſe *the Prieſts, the Levites, and the Judg were to give Sentence*? Or 3. Was it becauſe the *contemner of this Sentense was to be put to Death*?

Now if theſe Paſſages do prove *Infallibility*, there was then Infallibility in the *State*, as well as in the *Church*: in the *Judg*, the Civil Magiſtrate no leſs then the Prieſt: and in every Inferior Prieſt as well as the High Prieſt.

But I need not inſiſt on theſe Suggeſtions: ſince there is no arguing againſt matter of Fact. If therefore it doth appear, in any inſtance, That the Jewiſh Church [or the Roman] hath actually erred; 'tis too late to pretend that ſhe is Infallible.

To convince him that ſhe hath erred I Demand of this Miſſioner;

The Sentence of the *Sanhedrim*, whereby our Bleſſed Saviour was condemned as a Blaſphemer, was it a juſt and Legal Sentence, or was it not? If not. Then the Jewiſh Church, which pronounced it, was not Infallible. And conſequently this Argument, ſo triumphantly repeated, is utterly loſt.

But if this Miſſioner dares pretend;

That the Sentence of the *Sanhedrim* was a Legal Sentence; and that the Holy Jeſus was juſtly condemn'd as a Blaſphemer; let him take heed; leaſt contending for *Infallibility*; he forfeits his *Chriſtianity*.

However, for Arguments ſake, ſuppoſe it were granted; That the *Jewiſh Church was Infallible*; Muſt it thence be inferr'd; That the Chriſtian Church hath the ſame Privileg? Yes doubtleſs, think's this Miſſioner. For to *her* hath been given *a Covenant with better Promiſes*. True! But was *Infallibility* any of thoſe Promiſes?

miſes? This ought not be ſuppoſed but proved.

But now let it be further granted; That the *Chriſtian Church is Infallible*? What's this to the Church of *Rome*? Is there no other Church beſides the *Roman*? Or, *Is ſhe only the true Church of Chriſt*? Let the Miſſioner prove this; And *I ſhall moſt willingly bear him.* [Miſſioners Anſwer. p. 15.]

Secondly, He fills up his Pages with ſeveral other Places out of the Old Teſtament. Which I ſhall only tranſcribe, and then it will ſufficiently appear they are nothing to his purpoſe.

"He tells us, The Church ſhall "be *like a Mountain upon the top* "*of Mountains*, Iſa. 22. Like *a* "*Tabernacle ſeated in the Sun*, Pſ. "18. 4. That *all Nations ſhall* "*flow unto her.* That *Kings ſhall* "*be her Nurſing Fathers, and* "*Queens her Nurſing Mothers*, "Iſa. 49. 23. That *all the ends* "*of the Earth ſhall remember,* "*and turn unto the Lord, and all*

" *the Kindred of the Nations ſhall*
" *worſhip before him,* Pſal. 22. 27.

Beſides theſe plain Prophecies which [ſpeak not one word of the *Infallibility* of the Church of *Rome* but] only ſhew the Viſibility, Univerſality and Durance of the Chriſtian Church, which are not now the Diſpute, and therefore ſhall be conſider'd when occaſion is offered;

"I ſay, beſides theſe, we are "told that *in this Houſe of the* "*God of Jacob, he himſelf will* "*teach us his ways*; and *will* "*judge amongſt the Nations*, Iſa. 2. "3, 4. And then certainly we "ſhall neither be taught an Error, "nor have a wrong Sentence. [*Miſſioners Anſwer p.* 12, 13.]

Thats granted. God will certainly teach us Truth. And we ſhall never err. Provided, that we follow his Inſtructions.

Now all extraordinary ways being ceaſed, the Divine wiſdom ordinarily doth inſtruct us only by the Scriptures. Which, as St. *Peter* hath admoniſhed us, are

a more sure word of Prophecy then a voice from Heaven. *Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.* 2 Pet. 1. 19.

These *Holy Scriptures* are *the good old way.* By walking in which *the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err,* Isa. 35. 8. [Missioners Answer. p. 12, 21, 22.] *For the Testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple,* Psal. 19 7.

But now if the Church of *Rome,* for instance, shall leave this *good old way* of Truth, to wander in By-paths of her own; If she shall neglect, vilify and forsake the Holy Scriptures, to follow her own blind Traditions; 'Tis not her confidence that she is in the Right, that can keep her out of the *Ditch,* or secure her from falling.

" He tells us moreover, *That* " *God will not be wroth with his* " *Church, neither shall his kindness* " *depart from her, nor the Covenant* " *of his peace be removed. That*

" *all her Children shall be taught of*
" *the Lord*, That *she shall be esta-*
" *blished in righteousness*. That *who-*
" *soever shall gather together against*
" *her, shall fall for her sake*. And
" that *every Tongue that shall rise*
" *against her in judgment shall be*
" *condemned by her*. This is *the*
" *Heritage of the Servants of the*
" *Lord and their righteousness is of*
" *me saith the Lord* Isa. 54.

" Furthermore he tells us, that
" God hath made a Covenant
" with his Church. That *his*
" *Spirit shall be upon her, and his*
" *words which he hath put into her*
" *mouth, shall not depart out of her*
" *mouth, nor out of the mouth*
" *of her seed, nor out of the*
" *mouth of her seeds seed, saith*
" *the Lord, from henceforth*
" *and for ever*. Isa. 59. 20, 21.
" You see here a promise to the
" Church in all Ages, that she
" shall speak the very words which
" God shall put into her mouth,
" and therefore no Errors.

[*pag.* 13.]

To all this flourish I briefly

Reply

Reply in the words of Mr. *Chillingworth.*

" If the Church of *Rome* be *Zion* and *they that turn from iniquity in Jacob*, they may have " Title to this Covenant. If not; " They muſt forbear, and leave " it to the *Jews* after their Converſion. To whom it is appropriated by a more Infallible Interpreter than the Pope; I " mean St. *Paul Rom.* 11. 26. And " it ſeems the Church of *Rome* alſo " believes as much. For otherwiſe " why does ſhe in the Margent of " her Bible, ſend us to that place " of St. *Paul* for an Expoſition? [*Addit. Diſcourſes.* p. 36.]

Out of the New Teſtament *he hath cited ſeveral Texts*, which I ſhall ſet down in their order, with ſhort remarks upon them.

" Math. 16. 18. *Upon this Rock* " *I will build my Church: and the* " *Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail a-* " *gainſt it.* pag. 13.

This Text hath been ſo often and ſo fully Anſwer'd, that I admire the confidence of this Miſ-

ſoner, who at this time can pretend to urge it.

In ſhort. This Text is a Promiſe of the *Perpetuity* of the *Catholick* Church: But not of the *Infallibility* [no nor the *Perpetuity*] of the *Roman* Church.

" Matth: 28. 20. *And I am* " *with you alway even unto the end* " *of the World.* Amen.

What *You?* only *You* of the Church of *Rome?* Are there no other Paſtors and Teachers beſides *You* in the Church of Chriſt?

But doth *Preſence* ſignify *Infallibility?* Hath he not promiſed; *Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midſt of them,* Matth: 18.20. And are all ſuch Aſſemblies Infallible?

" John 14.16. *I will pray the Fa-* " *ther, and he ſhall give you another* " *Comforter, that he may abide with* " *you for ever.*

" V. 17. *even the Spirit of* " *Truth, whom the World cannot* " *receive.*

" V. 26. *He ſhall teach you all* " *things, and bring all things to*

" *your*

" *your remembrance, whatsoever I* " *have said unto you.*

" Ch. 16. v. 13. *When he the Spirit* " *of truth is come, he will guide you* " *into all truth: for he shall not* " *speak of himself; but whatsoever* " *he shall hear, that shall he speak;* " *and he will shew you things to* " *come.*

What hath the Church of *Rome* to do with these Scriptures? Did the Church of *Rome* ever hear the Sermons and Discourses of our Blessed Saviour? If not. How can they be brought to her Remembrance? Is it not therefore evident, from several Passages in both those Chapters, that these Promises do belong only to the Apostles, who personally conversed with our Saviour. As being made to those, *To whom he had many more things to say, which they were not yet able to bear,* To those *who had been with Christ from the Beginning.* To those from whom *Christ was now going away.* And whom he had *before told of his Departure.* Lastly, to whom *the Holy*

Ghoſt was to ſhew Things to come. A Promiſe, which the preſent Church of *Rome* dares not pretend to.

If here it ſhall be urged, that the Clauſe *for ever* muſt needs extend this Promiſe beyond their own Perſons, and ſo to their Succeſſors. To this I Anſwer.

1. This *for ever* ſignifies no more then to the end of their Lives. According to thoſe known Forms of Speech. *This is mine for ever.* Or *This ſhall be yours for ever.*

2. Suppoſe theſe Promiſes had been made to them and their Succeſſors? Had they no Succeſſors but them of the *Roman* Church? This hath been confidently pretended, but was never yet proved.

" Math: 18. 17. *And if he* " *ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it* " *unto the Church: but if he neg-* " *lect to hear the Church, let him* " *be unto thee as an Heathen man* " *and a Publican.* pag. 14.

What *Church* is this that muſt be *heard*? The Church of *Rome* only? nothing leſs. 'Tis evident by

by *the Church* in this Text, can be meant no other than that particular Church, of which the offending Brother was a Member.

But ſuppoſe that by *the Church* were meant the Church of *Rome*, and that this Church of *Rome* were to be *heard* and obey'd. What then? Is ſhe therefore Infallible? Are all thoſe that are to be heard and obey'd Infallible? Are not Kings and Parents and Maſters and Prelates and Abbots; are not all theſe to be heard and obey'd? And are all theſe Infallible?

" *Matth*: 28. 19. compared " with *Mark*. 16. 15, 16. *Go ye* " *therefore and Teach all Nations* " — *and preach the Goſpel to e-* " *very creature. He that believeth* " *and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved*; " *but he that believeth not ſhall be* " *damned*, p. 14.

What then? Therefore *The Church of Rome is Infallible.* This is ſuch a Demonſtration as *Euclid* never dreamed on.

" 1 Tim: 3. 15. — *That thou* " *mayeſt know how thou oughteſt to* " *behave*

"behave thy self in the house of God, "which is the Church of the living "God the pillar and ground of the "truth. p. 14. The Church Catholick, *without controversie*, is *the Pillar and Ground of the Truth*. Nay! even Particular Churches, as sound parts and members of the Catholick, and the Bishops of those Churches, may be adorned with that Title.

But what's this to the Church of *Rome*? Which is neither the Catholick Church, nor a sound Member of it.

Indeed had *Timothy* been Bishop of *Rome*, I should then have been obliged to examine, how and in what sense a Particular Church may be called, *the Pillar and ground of the truth*, without being Infallible. But since he was Bishop of *Ephesus* and not of *Rome*; and since the Infallibility of *Rome* and not of *Ephesus* is to be proved, there is no occasion for that Inquiry.

" Ephes: 4. 11, 12, 14. *And* " *he gave some, Apostles: and some*

" *Prophets*

" *Prophets: and ſome, Evangeliſts:*
" *and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers;*
" *for the perfecting of the Saints——*
" *that we henceforth be no more*
" *Children, toſſed to and fro, and*
" *carried about with every wind of*
" *doctrine, by the ſleight of men, and*
" *cunning craftineſs, whereby they*
" *lie in wait to deceive: but ſpeaking*
" *the truth in love, may grow up in*
" *him in all things, who is the head,*
" *even Chriſt.* p. 14.

Amongſt all theſe Orders heres no mention of an Infallible Judge of Controverſies, much leſs that this Judg is only to be found in the Church of *Rome.*

And thus I have briefly ſhewed, how impertinently theſe Scriptures have been urged by this Miſſioner. When I ſay *impertinently*, I do not thereby blame the conduct of this Writer (who hath taken the true method to defend his Church) but by that word do only expreſs the weakneſs of his Cauſe. Which hath been ſo often and ſo effectually expoſed, that it may well puzzle,

even

even the skill of a Missioner, to make a decent Defence. And indeed it is no little surprizing to observe, how perplexing and confused an Answer is here given, to the most plain and easy Question.

The *Plain-man* having often been admonished, to return (as they Phrase it) into the Bosom of the Church of *Rome*: and as a further inducement to hasten his Change, having been assur'd; That *the Church of Rome is Infallible*; and that Protestant Churches, for want of this *Infallibility*, are neither able to interpret Scripture, nor compose Differences in matters of Faith: I say being thus admonished, he makes this short Reply *viz.* That if the Church of *Rome* is infallible as they pretend, it would be a seasonable Charity to instruct him in this matter.

This is the Substance of that little Treatise. Which indeed is no other then a Paraphrase upon this Question.

" *Who is this Infallible Judg*;

" that

" that ſo upon occaſion I may con-
" ſult him? Tell me diſtinctly,
" Who is this unerring Guid?
" Where may I find him? And
" I do faithfully promiſe to re-
" ſign my ſelf to his Conduct.
[*Plain-mans Reply.* p. 18, 19, 22.]

Obſerve now what Anſwer the Miſſioner hath given to this important Queſtion. Pray mark it. 'Tis worth your notice.

"Miſtake me not I pray, I tell
" you diſtinctly, that the Church
" is my infallible Guide. And
" this Church is to be found ſpread
" over the face of the whole
" World, I may therefore ſecurely
" rely upon what ſhe teacheth,
" without troubling my ſelf to
" ſearch whether this or that par-
" ticular Perſon in her be Infal-
" lible or no.

[*Miſſioners Anſwer.* p. 16]

A moſt learned Determination. And very much, no doubt, to the ſatisfaction of the *Plain-man*. For whoſe further Inſtruction, I do thus expoſtulate with this Miſſioner.

You

The Country Parson to the Missioner.

YOu say, Sir, *the Church is my Infallible Guide*. Pray, what do you mean by this *Church*? Is it, in your Language, the *Teaching* Church, or the *Learning* part of the Church? *p.* 14. Or, in more proper Terms, Is it the Church *Representative*, or the Church *Diffusive*? sure not the Church *Diffusive*. For that comprehends every *private* Christian, even the most ordinary Mechanick. *And in case of Differences about the sense of Scripture, or any Divinely revealed Truths*, I hope these are no fit Persons *to decide the Difference, and end the Controversy*.

[Missioners Answer. *p.* 10.]

It remains therefore, That the Church *Representative* is this Infallible Guide. And then our next thought is to inquire; who this infallible Representative is. And though you assured the *Plain-man*, That he "may securely rely upon "what the Church teacheth, "without troubling himself to "search whether this or that par-"ticular Person in her be infalli-

"ble

" or no ; [*pag.* 16.] yet in contradiction to your self you are forced to Declare ;

" That a General Council, the " Supream Court of Judicature, is " the Legal Infallible Represen- " tative of the Church. *p.* 18. So " that whether the Controversie " be about the sense of Scripture, " or about the Canon of a Coun- " cil, there must be a Living Judg " to determine it : and this I say, " is the Church in her General " Councils, in which she is secured " from Error. *p.* 19.

And now why was not this acknowledgment made at the first? When the *Plain-man* desired you to tell him distinctly ; who is this Infallible Guide, why did you not then roundly and boldly Answer ; *I tell you* distinctly *A General Council is my Infallible Guide* ? Why such shuffling and shifting in so plain a matter ?

Doth not this evidently confirm the Plain-mans suspicion ; *That since your Discourses about this* Infallibility *are so various and uncer-*

tain,

tain, expreſſed with ſuch diffidence and caution, he can ſcarce think you believe it your ſelves?

[Plain-mans Reply. p. 8.]

However at laſt you have taken the courage to Declare; *That a General Council is this Living Infallible Judg, this unerring Guide.*

The truth of which pretence I do thus briefly examine.

In St. *Matthew's* Goſpel the *Plain-man* finds theſe words. *And he took the Cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, ſaying, Drink ye ALL of it,* Math. 26, 27.

This Text, he obſerves, is controverted betwixt the two Churches, and the ſenſe of it Diſputed.

The Church of *England* (in obedience to that laſt precept of her Lord, *Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you,* (Math. 28. 20.) hath thus Determined.

The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-people: For both the parts of the Lords Sacrament, by Chriſts ordinance and com-

commandment, ought to be miniſtred to all Chriſtian men alike. ART. 30.

But the Church of *Rome* (in direct oppoſition to our Lords Command) hath thus Decreed, in her Councils of *Conſtance* and *Trent*.

Although our Redeemer hath inſtituted the Sacrament in his laſt Supper, and hath delivered unto the Apoſtles in both kinds. Yet, *The Synod hath decreed, That it ſhould be received for a Law, that the Sacrament be adminiſtred in one kind.* And *whoſoever ſhall ſay, That by the command of God, all the Faithful ought to receive in both kinds; Let him be accurſed.* Concil. Conſt. *Seſſ.* 13. Concil. Trident. *Seſſ.* 21. *Cap.* 2. 3. *Can.* 1.

Now my *Plain-man* deſires to be inſtructed, whether Church is in the right? The Church of *England* which gives the Cup to Lay-people; or the Church of *Rome* which denies it. If his Reaſon might be Judge, he is then convinced; that the Church of *England* is Orthodox, and holds the truth in this matter. For he thinks

thinks it very reasonable, in the Administration of a Sacrament, to observe the Institution of our Blessed Saviour.

But you *Missioners* do tell him, he must not judg by Reason, but must submit to the Authority of an infallible Judge. Well! 'tis now hoped at last we shall bring the matter to a short issue.

"You have declared; *That* "*whether the Controversie be about* "*the sense of Scripture, or about the* "*Canon of a Council, there must be* "*a living Judg to determine it;* "*and this you say is a General Coun-* "*cil.* [Missioners Answer. p. 19.]

I demand therefore, and answer me distinctly. Is there any General Council actually now sitting, which (by its infallible Authority) may explain this Text, and determine these Controverted Canons, of the Councils of *Constance* and *Trent?* If there is such a Council, pray where is it to be found? in what part of the world are the Fathers assembled? But if there is no such

such Council. Then there is no Living infallible Judg, to Determine this Controverse about Half-Communion.

I am not able to conjecture, what you can possibly say to this, unless you will be so dull as to repeat your own words, *viz.* "That as *there is not any General* "*Council actually now sitting, to* "*end our Controversies, so nei-* "*ther needs there any, the Church* "*having so fully expressed her self* "*in the Canons and Definitions of* "*her preceeding Councils, and in par-* "*ticular in that of* Trent. p. 19.

I say, to urge this would be dull and impertinent. For you your self have confessed; That "these Canons of preceeding "Councils are but mere Writ-"ings, and a mere Writing can be "no Judg though indeed it may "be a Rule. So that these De-"crees of former Councils being "mere Writings they cannot, in "case of a Controversie arising "about their sense, determine "themselves and explain their "own

own meaning. So that in such a case as this, "Where there is a Controversie about the "Canon of a Council, there must be a Living "Judg, which you say, is a General Council.

Now, Sir, to make Application. Here is a Canon of the Council of Trent [*Sess.* 21 *Can.* 1.] That is controverted, and the sense of it Disputed. I do again beg of you to resolve me; Where is this Living Judg, this General Council, to determine this Canon? If there is none; Then the evidence of Truth doth constrain me to pronounce; That there is no Living Infallible Judg in the present Church of *Rome*.

These Things are plain and convincing, and admit of no Reply. But some men, I observe, are not to be silenced. These Missioners are so trained up, even from their Childhood, in the habit of wrangling (which they call Disputing) that they will hold the Conclusion in spight of all Premisses. And you, Sir, for your part will be still saying something, though nothing to the purpose. For thus you go on.

You have granted; That when there is a Controversie about the Canon of a Council, there must then be a living Judg to determine it: another Council must be called. "But, *say you*, pray take notice, "that we have no such Controversie at "present. All persons are agreed as to "what this Church hath defined, and the "sense of her Canons is not Controverted. "We see it in her Practice, we read it in "her Catechisms, we hear it from her "Pastors, &c. *p.* 20 —— Hold Sir, What a hurry of words is here to no purpose? How?

How? *The sense of her Canons not* [illegible] *verted?* Were I not come to the very [illegible] of my Paper, I would refresh your [illegible] on both sides.

I cou'd convince you of your mistake, from the great *Lateran Council*; Can. 3. *de Hæreticis.* Which hath been the subject of infinite Debate and Controversie. I forbear to repeat it at large, for a Reason that you know; and shall only demand; Whether *the Deposing Power*, is the establish'd Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, or no? The *Papist Represented* P. 1. pag. 47. shall resolve you in these words. "*For* "*the few Authors that are Abettors of* "*this Doctrine, there are of his Communion* "*three times the number, that publickly* "*disown all such Authority.*

I am not, at present, concerned to examine, How many these *few* Authors may be. *Bellarm. adv. Barcl. de Potest. Pap.* produceth the Testimony of neer *Fourscore* for the Popes *Temporal Power*; and almost all of them do plainly own his Power of *Deposing Kings.* But be they *more* or *less*, 'tis sufficient for my purpose; That *some* do affirm, what *others* deny, and consequently; That this 3d Canon of the Council of *Lateran* is controverted, and the sense of it Disputed.

I could descend to the Council of *Trent.* And there remind you of *Soto*, *Vega*, and *Catharinus*; Who had large Disputes about the sense of that Council.

From whence the Historian makes this remark. "*This seemed to put all men out* "*of hope to understand the meaning of the*

Council

[illegible], *seeing the principal men that were* [illegible] *in it, did not agree*, pag. 230.

But I must confine my self to this instance now before us. Where indeed the Question is not *de facto*, whether you deny the Cup to Lay-people? For *we see it in your Practice, we read it in your Catechisms, we hear it from your Pastors.* But the Question is *de jure.* Whether the Church of *Rome* hath Authority, to null and contradict the Institution of our Blessed Saviour? And whether in so doing the Church of *Rome* is not mistaken, hath not actually erred, and so lost her Infallibility? For, if in this or any other instance, we can prove that she hath actually erred, 'tis too late to pretend that she is Infallible. This is the point wherein my *Plain-man* desires to be resolved.

And now, where is this living Judg, this General Council actually now sitting to determine this Controversie? I say, *actually now sitting*; for when the Council is dissolved, and the Prelates and Fathers are in another world, it doth then cease to be a Living Judge.

To conclude.

If, as you say, a General Council is this Infallible Judg, this unerring Guide; Then, since there is no General Council actually now sitting, it undeniably follows; That there is no living Infallible Judg in the present Church of *Rome.*

The Plain-man to the Missioner.

Sir, This Discourse of our Parson, against the *Infallibility* of the Church of *Rome*, seems to me very convincing; and therefore I desire your Answer to it.

FINIS.

A DEFENCE OF THE Country Parson's ADMONITION: Against the EXCEPTIONS OF THE Plain-man's Answer.

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